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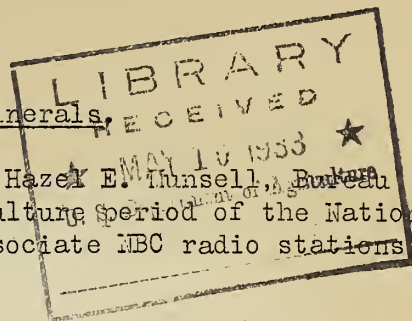
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THE HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR.

Eggs -- Rich in Vitamins and Minerals.



An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman and Dr. Hazel E. Munsell, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, and broadcast by a network of 49 associate NBC radio stations Tuesday, April 4, 1933.

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VAN DEMAN:

How do you do, Everybody:

I'm sorry that the Household Calendar had to skip a week. Miss Scott had some very excellent suggestions on renovizing the spring wardrobe, ready to give you last Tuesday. If you'd still like them, write me and I'll be glad to mail you a circular by Miss Scott called "Clothing Economies." Just address your letter to me at the Bureau of Home Economics, here in Washington.

Now let's switch from clothes to food -- to a particular food bargain right now. No matter how food prices rise and fall, April always brings us at least one low-cost food. That's eggs. If there's one food in our modern diets that we are safe in calling old-fashioned, I suppose it is eggs. For thousands of years we accepted them just as the hens gave them to us, and were thankful enough. Everybody knew eggs were good food, and let it go at that. Then about 40 years ago scientists began to analyze foods chemically and to discover there was a definite relation between certain food constituents in our diet and our growth and health. Now every year or two the nutrition people ferret out a new fact even about a food as old as eggs.

Dr. Munsell, you were saying the other day, I believe, that the vitamin studies you are running in your laboratory bring out a new idea about the vitamin D content of eggs.

MUNSELL:

Yes, they do. In cooperation with the poultry specialists we are attempting to find how the feed of the hen influences the vitamin D content of the eggs she lays. We are interested in this particularly because egg yolk is one of the best sources of vitamin D among our common foods. Vitamin D, you remember, is the anti-rachitic vitamin -- the one that prevents and helps cure rickets in children.

Child feeding specialists often recommend an egg a day for the child. That's a good rule. An egg a day will give the child a large part of the vitamin D he needs, especially if the egg contains the maximum amount of vitamin D.

VAN DEMAN:

By the way you put that, I take it that not all eggs are equally rich in vitamin D.

MUNSELL:

No, they are not. The yolk of one egg may be 30 to 40 times as rich in vitamin D as another yolk. Our studies are not complete yet and I don't want you

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to take what I'm saying as the final word. We have found, however, that if a hen gets a ration rich in vitamin D, that is a ration supplemented with cod-liver oil or viosterol, she puts an extra amount of vitamin D into the yolks of her eggs. Hens can also get some vitamin D by being out on the range in the sunshine. But the vitamin-D-rich ration is the most important.

VAN DEMAN:

Then those largest liveliest white rats I saw in the cages down in your laboratory received their daily quota of egg yolk of high vitamin D potency.

MUNSELL:

Yes. And when those animals were autopsied at the end of the experiment their bones were strong and well-developed. But the skeletons of the animals that had the eggs less rich in vitamin D showed some of the symptoms of rickets. We use white rats in all these vitamin studies on eggs. In fact, the white rat has been used so long in work of this kind that he's like a standardized chemical reagent. Also, white rats develop so rapidly that we can get results from several generations in the course of a year.

VAN DEMAN:

Feeding experiments also show that eggs are rich in other vitamins as well as D, don't they, Dr. Munsell?

MUNSELL:

Yes. We know now that eggs, that is the yolks, are rich in vitamin A -- the growth-promoting vitamin.

We have every reason to believe that the feed of the hen has a great influence on the quantity of vitamin A she stores in her eggs. But we don't know, yet just how high we can build up the vitamin A content of eggs.

There's also an abundance of vitamin G in eggs, and it seems to be about equally distributed in the yolk and the white.

VAN DEMAN:

Vitamin G, that's the one we need in our diet to prevent pellagra. Well, Dr. Munsell, you said that eggs were rich in vitamin A, vitamin D, and vitamin G. That doesn't leave many more to account for.

MUNSELL:

Well it leaves three more, B, E, and C. Eggs are a fair source of vitamin B, and the yolk contains some vitamin E. When it comes to vitamin C, eggs are entirely lacking. We have to turn to fruits and vegetables, such as oranges and tomatoes, for sure-fire sources of vitamin C.

VAN DEMAN:

But vitamins don't by any means complete the story of the food value of eggs. Can you summarize the rest in just a few sentences?

MUNSEL:

I'll try. But it's a bit hard, considering that egg yolk is one of the richest known sources of iron in the diet. However, there's been so much said about iron-rich foods that I believe everybody understands pretty well the function of iron in building red blood cells and in preventing anemia.

Eggs are also very rich in phosphorus, and they contain some calcium. They are also outstanding as a protein food, in the class with milk and meat.

VAN DEMAN:

Now just one last question, Dr. Munsell, that I believe is in the minds of many of us. Is the color of the yolk or the shell of an egg in any way tied up with food value?

MUNSELL:

No, not so far as we can tell. An egg with a white shell and a pale yellow yolk may be just as rich in vitamins and minerals as a brown-shelled egg with a deep golden yolk. Some day, and maybe in the near future, we'll be buying eggs with a guarantee as to their vitamin content.

VAN DEMAN:

Well, that is turning the hen into a vitamin laboratory.

Thank you, Dr. Munsell, for coming over today. Next week, Mrs. Yeatman will be with me to give some of her practical suggestions on cooking eggs.

Goodbye for this time.

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